



Stanford Classics in
Theater Presents

THE
GOOD
THE
BAD
AND THE
MENAECHMI

a Space-Western Comedy of Errors based
on Plautus' *Menaechmi*

MAY 18 & 19
8PM

SCIT
CLASSICS



VICE PROVOST
FOR
GRADUATE
EDUCATION

Elliot Program Center
free / \$5 non-student
scit.stanford.edu

THE MENAECHEMI

CAST

The Narrator	Stephen Sansom
Lil Dicky	Emma Grover
Menaechmus	David Pickel
His Wife	Jenny Vo-Phamhi
Fanny	Brandon Bark
Barkeep	Kilian Mallon
Menaechmus	Bobby Pragada
Messenoid	Erin O'Halloran
Old Man	Ted Kelting
The Posse	Allison Fink, Hannah LeBlanc, Alyson Melzer, Justin Muchnick, Becca Sansom, & Lina Wang

CREW

Director	Brandon Bark
Producer	Verity Walsh
Assistant Producer	Alyson Melzer
Stage Manager	Stephen Sansom
Lights and Sound	Mark Pyzyk
Costume Support	Lizzy Ten-Hove
Saloon Tunes	Nick Romeo
Choreography and Lyrics	Ted Kelting, Hannah LeBlanc, Alyson Melzer, Erin O'Halloran, Brittney Szempruch, Verity Walsh

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, two twin brothers—both named Menaechmus—were accidentally separated at birth. One remained on their homeworld, while the other ended up in the late 19th-century American West. Space Menaechmus longs to be reunited with his missing brother, but Wild West Menaechmus, ignorant of his extraterrestrial heritage, has made a career as a successful—if disreputable—lawyer, by morning letting off criminals and by afternoon cavorting with town drunks and saloon wenches. Then a stranger arrives in town, plucky service droid in tow—a stranger who bears a striking resemblance to our hero. What follows is a good, old-fashioned farce: mistaken identities and near misses, madcap schemes and counter-schemes, and possibly even (spoiler!) a happy ending

The more literate among you may soon recognize that this plot (give or take the aliens) is structurally identical to that of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, and in fact both our play and the Bard's share a source text in Plautus's *Menaechmi*, a Roman comedy first performed in the early 3rd century BCE; if not, perhaps you should stop whittling away your weekends at cheap productions such as this and get yourself some culture.

If I've insulted you, you should leave now, because it only gets worse from here. Plautus doesn't give us kings and courtiers; he offers us a realistic, if somewhat exaggerated, look at real people, whether they are murderous cooks, drunken parasites, paltry prostitutes (yours truly), or, worst of all, lawyers (no adjective required).

Plautus set his play in the fictional Greek town of Epidamnus, a punny name that roughly translates to "at a loss." The Roman audience more easily laughed at the "dipsomaniacs, dottards, drovers, and extremely persuasive bar wenches" appearing on stage because they were ostensibly non-Roman. But of course, there were extremely persuasive bar wenches in Rome, too. While the play *seems* to argue that one has to travel all the way to Epidamnus to find such sordid characters, in reality it is possible to laugh at them only because they are all-too familiar. There is an extremely persuasive bar wench in each of us, and fair Dodge City, where we lay our scene, could be anywhere.

In the past, SCIT has adapted viscerally satirical comedies like Eupolis's *Demes* and Aristophanes's *Thesmophoriazousae* to shed light on political and cultural trends today. That is precisely what we do here. This production may appear provocatively unprovocative—an error of a comedy. But beneath the crotchless pantaloons and the two sex jokes repeated 54 times, we offer a gut-wrenching portrayal of the American West that would bring Ken Burns to tears. We bravely expose the travails of corset-burning proto-feminists; the breasts of ladies of the night; the plights of senior citizens; the injuries of a renegade lawyer upon bar association and bar wench; the unequal pay of Irish cooks; the identity crises of former sexbots yearning for love and freedom; and the dangers faced by alien migrants who landed there.

And since you, too, have landed in our theater, we hope you will come away—and arrive away, too—not entirely at a loss. —*Brandon Bark*

OFFICERS & TRANSLATORS

President	Brandon Bark
Treasurer	Verity Walsh
Secretary	David Pickel
Translation Team	Brandon Bark, Carissa Bark, Nick Bartos, Kevin Ennis, Ted Kelting, Hannah LeBlanc, Kilian Mallon, Alyson Melzer, Erin O'Halloran, David Pickel, Stephen Sansom, Brittney Szempruch, Verity Walsh, Sarah Wilker
Additional Support	Kevin Ennis, Aaron Neiman, Lizzy Ten-Hove, Sarah Wilker

CAST BIOS

Brandon Bark (Fanny, *3rd-year PhD, Classics*)

Brandon is pleased to be appearing in his third consecutive SCIT performance, once again in drag. He wonders whether every new SCIT performance is a round of solo strip poker which he has lost.

Emma Grover (Lil Dicky, *Sophomore, Classics*)

Grover is best known for appearances on *Sesame Street* and is the first Muppet to act in a SCIT performance.

Allison Fink (Posse, *Stanford alum [BS 2012, MS 2013]*)

Allison doesn't even go here. She just has a lot of feelings.

Ted Kelting (Old Man, *5th-year PhD, Classics*)

This performance marks a lustrum for Ted. No pigs, sheep, or bulls were harmed. Maybe that's why his jokes just aren't landing this year. Cf. Cato Agr. 141.1.1.

Hannah LeBlanc (Posse, *5th-year PhD, History*)

Hannah is approximately 25–30 years old, vaccinations up to date, good with cats.

Kilian Mallon (Barkeep, *5th-year PhD, Classics*)

This here Cillian Pádraig Éamon Chaoimhín Ó Mealláin, better known as Typhoid Kil, comes from a long litany of loquacious publicans. Though infamous for his brash, boastful, unreliable, lazy, cowardly, and chronically impecunious character, but he is still the finest supplier of poteen spirits in all of good ol' Californi-ay. Now that grand Disraeli fella says the Oirish are a 'wild, reckless, indolent, uncertain and superstitious race that have no sympathy with the English character' fixated on nothing but 'clannish broils and coarse idolatry.' Well begorrah and bejaysus that sounds right like the Wild West to me!

Alyson Melzer (Posse, Assistant Producer, *4th-year PhD, Classics*)

Why-yi-yi-yippie-yi-yay-yippie-yi-yo-yippie-yi-yay

Why-yi-yi-yippie-yi-yay-yippie-yi-yo-yippie-yi-yo

Why-yi-yi-yippie-yi-yay-yippie-yi-yo-yippie-yi-yay

Why-yi-yi-yippie-yi-yay-yippie-yi-yo-yippie-yi-yo

Justin Muchnick (Posse, *Sophomore, Classics*)

Justin Muchnick is humbled to be glorifying His name through this production. Nos salvet IHC. #allglorytogod

Erin O'Halloran (Messenioid, *Classics wife*)

Erin began acting professionally at age nine and attended a high school for the performing arts, before tragically abandoning her theatrical calling to pursue higher education in the UK. She first heard about SCIT during her husband's visit weekend at Stanford last year, on which basis she demanded he quit his job and uproot their lives in London in order to facilitate this, her Triumphant Return to the Stage.

David Pickel (Menaechmus, *3rd-year PhD, Classics*)

Some people call me the space cowboy yeah, some call me the gangster of love, some people call me Maurice, 'cause I speak of the... pompatus of love.

Bobby Pragada (Menaechmus, *Sophomore, English*)

OH NO I ALMOST FORGOT TO SUBMIT A BIO THEN HOW WILL THE AUDIENCE KNOW WHO I AM QUICK QUICK I'VE GOTTA EMAIL VERITY AAAAH

Mark Pyzyk (Lights and Sound, *Post-doc, Political Science*)

Like a flying dutchman or baba yaga house, Mark occasionally appears at Stanford from parts unknown, and then vanishes just as quickly. As he passes through town, saving its kindly folk from marauders and highway robbers, he also rights wrongs of a more technical sort. Bad lighting, inappropriate sound cues—all of these are targets in his crosshairs. If we're lucky, you won't even have noticed he was there.

Nick Romeo (Saloon Tunes, *local talent*)

Nick Romeo is a journalist and critic whose work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, *National Geographic*, *The New Republic*, *The Atlantic*, *Slate*, *Rolling Stone*, *Newsweek*, NPR, *The MIT Tech Review*, and many other publications. Behold how far he has fallen.

Rebecca Sansom (Posse, *local talent*)

Mother of the baby, Frankie Jo. Sixth year SCIT veteran. Filmmaker, who interviewed Zach Braff's step dad for her next documentary; coming soon to a theatre near the moon.

Stephen Sansom (The Narrator, *6th-year PhD, Classics*)

Great news! Stephen has just leveraged six years of SCIT to serve as partial fulfillment of his PhD—that, and a dissertation entitled "The Poetics of Bay Area BBQ: Smoke, Low-and-Slow, and Sauce." Graduation, here we come!

Brittney Szempruch (Choreography, *6th-year PhD, Classics*)

Brittney Szempruch is a doctor. For continuity reasons, she could not be here. Just like the other doctor.

Lizzy Ten-Hove (Costume support, *5th year PhD, Classics*)

Lizzy wasn't going to do anything for SCIT this year. Then she heard that some vests were too big and some dresses were too modest, and those are two things she cannot abide.

Jenny Vo-Phamhi (Wife, *Sophomore, Classics*)

Enjoys lunch.

Verity Walsh (Producer, *2nd-year PhD, Classics*)

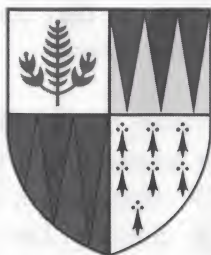
When not producing for SCIT, Verity is busy preparing for publication her seminal work, "Aristotle's Wank Sock: A Study of Observational Confidence in *De generatione animalium*."

Lina Wang (Posse, *Sophomore, Classics*)

Lina Wang would like to thank her family, friends, and William Whitaker for their unwavering love and support. She would not be here today without them.

SPECIAL THANKS...

...from the whole cast and crew to our generous sponsors, without whom we would not be celebrating Stanford Classics in Theater's tenth year of ancient comedy made new!



**VICE PROVOST
— FOR —
GRADUATE
EDUCATION**

Stanford | Department of Classics

ABOUT SCIT

SCIT is a collective of Stanford graduate students, undergrads and peers who annually translate, adapt and perform ancient comedy. Since our founding in 2009 our aim has been to promote understanding of and engagement with classical theater through original research and production. We're always looking for new talent—learn more at scit.stanford.edu!